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THE
HOLY EUCHARIST

A SERIES OF LECTURES
DELIVERED TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
ST. PAUL'S LECTURE SOCIETY

BY

THE REV. W. C. E. NEWBOLT, M.A.

CANON AND CHANCELLOR OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, ETC.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

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P R E F A C E.

IT is with very considerable hesitation that I have yielded to the request of my kind audience and friends of the St. Paul's Lecture Society that these lectures should be printed. Not that I believe the statements made in them to be incorrect, or because they were spoken hastily or with insufficient preparation. This was not the case.

But I do feel that lectures on a subject like this should be carefully revised, corrected, with quotations fully noted and expressions balanced, which I have not been able to do. I have left the notes practically just as they were taken down by the shorthand writer, only making such alterations as the sense required, or where there had been a misunderstanding of what was said. This must be my apology for the utter absence of all literary style, that I endeavoured to make my remarks as plain and simple as possible, and

that there was an endeavour to subordinate all else to directness.

I can only plead for the indulgence of those who are kind enough to read these pages, and to ask them to remember that they are lecture notes, not a treatise, printed with my sanction rather than by my desire, on a subject in which I know full well every word ought to be measured and tested, and that they are printed, not published. May God's blessing, poured out hitherto in such abundance, continue with our Lecture Society, and may we be by our lives the best commentary on and witness to the love of God in giving us the Spiritual Food of His Most Holy Sacrament.

W. C. E. N.

June 27th, 1903.

THE printed edition of these lectures has long ago become exhausted, and it is only in deference to pressure brought to bear upon me, and the assurance that there is still a demand for them, that I submit to their being published. It had been my intention to rewrite them, but partly owing to pressure of work, and partly to the fact that since the first appearance of the lectures I have written another book dealing with the same subject, I have decided to leave them practically as they are.

I would ask my readers to pardon the somewhat colloquial tones in which they were delivered as lectures; and for notes, references and more amplified statements and explanations, I would refer them to the book already alluded to, "The Sacrament of the Altar," in the Oxford Library of Practical Theology, 1908.

W. C. E. N.

June 1st, 1911.

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I.

THE HOLY COMMUNION THE FOOD OF THE CHRISTIAN.

I MUST crave your indulgence in having to treat of an extremely difficult subject which will tax all your patience and, I am afraid, all your kind attention. It is extremely difficult, in speaking of so great a mystery, to speak of it in a manner becoming its supreme dignity, and in a way in which we can approach anywhere near to grasping so profound and so great a truth as that which is enshrined in the Sacrament of the Altar. Now, the subject I have to put before you as that of our first lecture is 'The Holy Communion the Food of the Christian,' and you will remember that when our Blessed Lord gave His great Eucharistic discourse, as recorded in the sixth chapter of St. John (about which I shall have to say something later on), He contrasted the sacred Gift He was about to bestow with the gift of manna in the wilderness, showing how much more real and true was His Gift than that food which God Almighty provided for the physical wants of Israel in their journeyings. 'Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. . . . If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever.' And

yet we may take the one as a type of the other, and if we had time we should see how the manna provides some useful heads under which to consider this subject which is now before us—The Holy Communion the Food of the Christian.

In the very short time I have in which to work out this extremely difficult subject, I can only just give you some indications of what I mean. I would notice first that as manna was food for the way, food for the children of Israel as they were journeying in the wilderness, and not a reward provided for them when they had reached Canaan, but food which was to support them on their journey—so the Holy Communion is emphatically our Food for the way, our Food for the journey. I mention this, though it seems so obvious, because the older of us will remember what a great change has come over the feeling of English Churchmen in this respect. In the old days the Holy Communion was a very rare event in a man's life; young people and tempted people were almost prohibited from coming to it at all. It was looked upon as the privilege of those who had plenty of time and quiet, and it was very carefully prepared for. I would indeed that we had more of that careful preparation now, the preparation of a recollected and earnest life. Now, you know, all is changed: young people, almost children, receive the Blessed Sacrament, and quite rightly; frequently there is the theatre in the evening, Communion in the morning, the two jostling each other side by side.

Which of these courses is right?

Clearly the second is right in theory, but it is very much harder to carry out. We cannot divide up our life like a concert into two parts, sacred and secular. No, our life is one; and just as the manna was the food for the Children of Israel in the wilderness, so our Holy Communion is not a feast at the end of life, but Food for the way. A man was asked why he received the Holy Communion so often. He said, 'I receive often because I often sin'. Of course that statement needs a great deal of safeguarding, but you will see what I mean and work it out for yourselves. When we are tempted and tried and in difficulties, it is then especially that we want this Food for the way.

Now, I have only time just to indicate most of the other points of typical resemblance. I should like to have pointed out that as the manna had to be gathered in the early morning, so the Holy Communion must be received early in life, and ever with the freshness of a daily renewed life. 'O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee.'

I should have liked to have said something of the important custom of Fasting Communion, so that the Holy Communion should be the first food in the day—a practice which we find had established itself as a universal habit as early as the days of St. Augustine. But I must confine myself now to this one suggestive point in the type before us, namely, that when the Children of Israel saw the strange food, which they

had never seen before, lying on the ground, they all commenced to cry out, 'Manna!—manna! What is it? What is it?' which may well serve to remind us of the main question before us, namely—that question which, ever since the eleventh century at all events, has been fiercely disputed and vehemently argued, in a controversy which still rages around this Sacrament of Love with great asperity and great bitterness, as men are still calling out 'Manna!—manna! What is it?'

Men have gone to the stake in order to establish the truth of what they have held about this holy and wonderful Sacrament; and men are contented at the present day to undergo every sort of obloquy and abuse for stating what they believe to be God's truth and the tradition of the Catholic Church as to this wonderful mystery. Therefore I want to try and answer to-day as simply as possible the question of the adoring soul—Manna!—manna! What is it? What is this holy Sacrament of Love?

We will consider then to-day this great privilege which the Holy Sacrament carries with it, that in it we have the medium of Christ's Real Presence to us; that in it, in the Sacrament, the Body and Blood of Christ, as the inward part of the Sacrament—you will notice the words I am quoting, the words of the Church Catechism—are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper. Now, it is one of the saddest things, that a mystery like this should be made a subject of so much controversy and dispute, and

that in the case of Mr. Bennett at Frome, a few years ago, it should have been even brought into the Law Courts. But sad as it is, we must face it and try to see what it is that, as loyal sons of the Church of England, we may believe concerning this sacred mystery.

'This is My Body,' said our Blessed Lord of the Bread which He took in His hand at the first Eucharist which He instituted the night before He suffered. I would ask you to notice that the word 'is' is capable of being used in three ways. It might have meant 'This is identical with My Body;' or, it might mean, 'This represents My body simply from the effect produced upon the spectator or receiver—*i.e.* it is a memorial, something to remind you of My Body;' or, thirdly, it might mean, 'This represents My Body as expressing the intention of the Giver to bestow a blessing on certain favoured men'—that is to say, the piece of bread which the communicant receives would be a pledge and token of something greater which was going on within the inner life of his soul. Now, if you will carry these three distinctions in your mind, you will see that in them we have the three main interpretations which have been given to these words, 'This is My Body'. The first, 'This is identical with My Body,' represents the Catholic doctrine (of which more presently) that our Lord is objectively, really, and indeed present in the Holy Sacrament.

The second, 'This represents My Body,' is the doctrine of Zwingli and the Swiss Protestants and

other schools, who hold that the Holy Communion is the communication of no gift in itself ; but simply is a bare memorial of our Blessed Lord's Passion and death, whereby the devout Christian kindles and keeps alive certain pious aspirations in his soul as he receives It. That is a very common theory still, but chiefly among those who do not belong to the Church, and I do not think it need detain us any longer.

The third, 'This represents My Body,' is what is known as the virtualist theory, which was propounded by Calvin. He, too, did not believe in anything like that which is represented by the consecration of the Eucharist, but at the same time wished to give full effect to the Sacrament. He maintained that the Holy Communion was only a pledge, or sign. The communicant received bread and wine as a kind of pledge or token of something which was taking place in his soul, of a great presence which God, at the same moment as he received the bread and wine, was communicating to the heart of the pious receiver, the only connection between the bread and wine and the grace which was received being that their reception took place at the same moment. At the same time that he received the piece of bread and the little draught of wine, he was receiving at that moment the gift of Christ in His own soul in a heavenly and mysterious way ; or, as Calvin would add, 'if he were among those predestined to eternal salvation' ; the elements, the bread and wine, being merely a bare pledge, an assurance, of God's inward action, and the gift itself being only

bestowed, according to Calvin, on those whom God had predestined to eternal life ; the elements being a sign of an inward gift to those predestined to eternal life, to others, only a partaking of mere bread and wine. So you can see how true it is that, as Mr. Keble said, 'Virtual presence is real absence'.

The effect of this is to attribute to the faith or election of the person who receives, the power of making possible the simultaneous reception of bread and wine and the Body and Blood of Christ ; according to the higher development of it in England (and it is a popular theory to-day), the effect of contact with the believer's faith at reception is to turn that which was till then nothing but the merest earthly elements of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ—an act of equal wonder with that of consecration by an appointed order of persons ; only in this case the power is ascribed to the faith of men, not to the word of Christ or the operation of the Holy Ghost. I hope I have made this clear. It was absolutely necessary to state these distinctions as shortly and as clearly as I could. I do not wish to return to them.

Now, that to which I particularly wish to draw your attention is what I call the Catholic Doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Elements, which, again, has to be cleared of three misapprehensions. The first need not detain us a minute. It was known in old days as the error of the 'men of Capernaum,' which speaks of our Blessed Lord's Body and Blood as present in the Holy Communion under the same

conditions as when He was upon earth. I believe there is only one ancient writer who ventured to maintain this view. It is the view which is denounced of course in the twenty-eighth Article, as overthrowing the nature of a Sacrament, because from being a Sacrament they, the actual Elements, become the Body and Blood of Christ, actual flesh and blood, which is contrary to plain reason, and contradicts the testimony of our senses, and is repugnant to us as Christians; while it also overthrows the nature of a Sacrament, for then there is no longer a Sacrament, a sign of a thing present, but the actual thing itself, which is contrary to common sense and to our own deeper feelings of what is right. At the same time it cannot be denied that it does represent certain popular and ignorant beliefs. If you were to question an Irish or Italian peasant on the matter, you would get an answer hardly to be distinguished from this; and at certain periods in the Middle Ages, this belief as among the uneducated was, I am afraid, very prevalent.

Then there comes the famous doctrine of Transubstantiation. You see what I am trying to do—I am trying to clear the way. The Catholic Doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Elements had to be cleared of that gross superstition, to which I have already alluded first of all. Now, I want to deal with another misapprehension, as I conceive it—*viz.* Transubstantiation—in which I would ask you to notice that ‘substance’ means a very different thing from that which it means in the Article I quoted just

now, and in the common estimation of the unlearned. I perhaps may be pardoned if I try to explain it to you, because Transubstantiation of course has a great historical interest for us, and it is well that we should really understand what is meant by that strange and wonderful theory of accounting for the mode of the presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. In the old definitions of the scholastic philosophy all objects were regarded as possessing certain 'accidents,' which were objects of the senses, and a substance which itself was an object only to the mind. If I may take a very simple instance—an orange; the yellow colour of the orange is an accident; it does not affect its taste or condition. I might go on to say that the shape was an accident, that its particular flavour was an accident. I might possibly conceive an orange which was blue and square and flavoured like a peach, which was at the same time to all intents and purposes an orange. The philosophers of that period would say that what makes it to be an orange is an inward substance, something which you cannot see or taste, but only apprehend by the mind, a sort of 'orangidity' which makes it to be an orange, and which remains when you take away its colour, its feeling to the touch, its taste, and smell, and so on. And so it is with a piece of bread. It is an inner substance which makes it to be bread, a sort of 'breadidity,' if the term may be used.

A strange and complicated theory, I grant you, and very dependent on hypothesis. I suppose most of us

would say that, after you have taken away that which appeals to the touch and taste and smell, and everything else which we call the accidents of the bread, you have taken away the bread itself; that a piece of bread is the sum of all these accidents, and that there is no such thing as substance in this sense. Therefore I venture to think, both because of the great philosophical difficulties and because the word substance has two meanings, that it is to be regretted that the Western Church took over this doctrine of substance and accident as a way of explaining the mode of our Blessed Lord's presence in the Holy Communion. It was so affirmed at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and was again asserted at the Council of Trent in 1551. Transubstantiation as a doctrine is weighted with all the difficulties of a philosophical theory, and also, as we have seen, the word 'substance' is ambiguous. A great majority of people understand Transubstantiation to mean that the bread and wine have ceased to exist after consecration, and have become actually flesh and blood, which is a doctrine condemned by our Thirty-nine Articles, and also by our natural senses.

Then there comes a third misconception, as I venture to call it, which I find extremely difficult to explain—the doctrine of Consubstantiation, which was attributed to Luther by his enemies. Luther himself never so describes his theory of the manner of the Real Presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist. But his enemies said that what he taught really

amounted to Consubstantiation, which may be regarded as a confusion of our Blessed Lord's Substance with the substance of bread and wine, by which a third substance, as it were, was formed; just as when you mix wine and water, the two substances mixing together form a third substance which takes their place composed of the two. It is very complicated and extremely difficult to explain, and therefore I will say no more about it, but put it on one side. What I would have you to notice is that these difficult and complicated theories have all arisen from the same endeavour to attempt to define the method or mode of our Blessed Lord's Presence in the Holy Communion, which passes the wit of man really to define or explain.

The Church of England contents herself with stating the fact without attempting to express the 'how,' and that is the real distinction between us and the Church of Rome on this subject.

We both of us declare that we believe in the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Holy Communion; but the Church of Rome attempts to define the 'how,' and the Church of England simply contents herself with the actual fact. The following is a quotation from a very learned man—Bishop Thirlwall, in a charge delivered in 1866—quoted by Dr. Liddon: 'The Church of England, on the contrary, has dealt with this subject in a spirit of true reverence as well as of prudence and charity. She asserts the mystery inherent in the institution of the Sacrament, but

abstains from all attempts to investigate or define it, and leaves the widest range open to the devotional feelings and private meditations of her children with regard to it.'

Where, then, shall I find the Anglican doctrine of the Real Presence expressed? I find it in the Catechism, in the Articles, in the prayers, in the rubrics, in the Homilies, and I find it in the writings of divines. Time, however, will only allow me to traverse briefly this wide field which is open to us.

First of all, let us take the Catechism. You will remember that the Sacramental portion of the Catechism was written by a Dean of St. Paul's, Bishop Overall, in the year 1604, in the days of James I. The questions and answers of this very important document really contain in brief the doctrines which we are seeking to understand. I would have you notice that the questions and answers which deal with the Holy Communion are three, whereas the questions which concern the essence of Holy Baptism are only two. Holy Baptism has an outward sign and an inward grace; but Holy Communion has an outward sign and an inward *part*, which Baptism has not, and also, together with Baptism, an inward grace; the outward sign being bread and wine, the inward part being 'the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper,' and the grace being the virtues and benefits received by our souls in feeding on that Body and Blood, just

as our bodies receive benefit from feeding on the bread and wine.

And notice that these answers of the Catechism embody a very ancient distinction which first appears, as far as I know, in St. Augustine, and afterwards became regularly formulated, between the *Sacramentum* (the outward part), the *Res Sacramenti* (the inward part or substance), and the *Virtus Sacramenti* (the strength or benefits of the Sacrament). Moreover, you will notice that the expression used is a very strong one: 'Which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper'. We do not really want anything stronger than that simple, scholarly, and theological definition which is put before us in the Catechism. Surely it is one of the worst signs of the present time that we seem to be getting tired of the old Church Catechism, and I heard with shame the other day of a clergyman giving up in his schools the teaching of that formula in order to conciliate religious opponents. We do not want anything stronger, anything more definite and clear, than this plain and simple theological statement of the Catechism.

But there are other parts of the Prayer Book which are equally clear. In the last revision of the Prayer Book by the Caroline divines in 1661, when the revisers put our first Exhortation in its present place, they made this very significant alteration. In the Book of 1552 it ran thus: 'Dearly beloved, forasmuch as our duty is to render to Almighty God our heavenly Father most hearty thanks for that He hath given His

Son, . . . not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance, . . . as it is declared unto us as well by God's Word as by the Holy Sacraments of His blessed Body and Blood'. This was altered as follows: 'Dearly beloved, . . . it is our duty to render most humble and hearty thanks for that He hath given His Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy Sacrament'. The alteration is significant.

In the third Exhortation again there are several expressions to be noted, *e.g.*, 'Then we spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood'; or again: 'Not considering the Lord's Body,' of which a divine has said: 'Unless a man discern the Lord's Body where it is not, of necessity it must be there where it is discerned to be'. Then again there is the quotation of 1 Corinthians xi. 27: 'Guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord'.

I next refer you to the rubric which is known as the Black Rubric at the end of the Communion Service. In 1552 it was there said, as to 'kneeling': 'It is not meant thereby that any adoration is done, or ought to be done, either unto the Sacramental Bread and Wine there bodily received or unto any real and essential presence there being of Christ's natural Flesh and Blood'. You will notice, that rubric was dropped out in the revision of Elizabeth, and that when it reappeared in 1662 these words 'real and essential presence' were altered into 'corporal presence'. I

hope I may later on in another lecture return to this rubric.

Next we have the words of administration : 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee'; 'The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee'. These words were omitted in the second Prayer Book of 1552, and the words 'Take and eat this,' etc., 'Drink this,' etc., were substituted; but when the Prayer Book was revised in 1559, the old form was put back again, combined with the 1552 form; so that we have now: 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving,' and so with the words of administering the Chalice.

Then we come to the 'Prayer of Humble Access'. I remember a man who was in difficulties about the doctrine of the Real Presence asking Dr. Liddon to explain to him whether it was a doctrine really tenable in the Church of England, and Dr. Liddon referred him to this prayer, which, as you know, was added at the Reformation (it appeared first in 'the Order of Communion') in the year 1548, and may therefore be taken to indicate the mind of the Reformers, where we read: 'Grant us so to eat the Flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His Blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His Body, and our souls washed through His most precious Blood'. Then again there is the Prayer of Oblation, in which

we read, 'That all we who are partakers of this Holy Communion may be fulfilled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction'.

And lastly, of course, there is the Prayer of Consecration itself. What statements could be stronger than these?

After the prayers and rubrics we turn to the Thirty-nine Articles. In Article XXVIII. we read: 'The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith'. Bishop Forbes says: 'One cannot exaggerate the importance of the words, "given," "taken," "eaten". First given, then taken; what is first given and then taken, is something external to him who takes it. (It is given in a heavenly manner, for the whole transaction is supernatural. It is taken in an heavenly and spiritual manner, for we have to do with the order of God and not the order of nature.) It is eaten in the same way; for it is the spirit that quickeneth—the flesh profiteth nothing.' There is a letter written by Bishop Geste, who tells us that he wrote this Article, in which he states: 'I suppose you have heard how the Bishop of Gloucester found himself grieved with the placing of this adverb "*only*" in this Article: "The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, after an heavenly and spiritual manner only," because it did take away the Presence of Christ's Body in the Sacrament, and privily noted me to take his part

therein. . . . Whereas between him and me, I told him plainly that the word "*only*" in the aforesaid Article did not exclude the presence of Christ's Body from the Sacrament but only the grossness and sensibleness in the receiving thereof. . . . Therefore I told him I would speak against him herein, and the rather because the Article was of my own penning.' This letter is important, as showing that the writer did not mean to contradict the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence by the word 'only'.

Then in the Homilies we have these expressions: 'The due receiving of Christ's blessed Body and Blood under the form of bread and wine'; or again: 'Receiving our Maker and Saviour in this blessed Sacrament'; so again: 'In the Supper of the Lord there is no vain ceremony, no bare sign, no useless figure of a thing absent'; and further there is the remarkable expression used of the Holy Sacrament which speaks of a 'Ghostly substance'.

Now, as my time is nearly expired, I do not think I can do better than read to you before I go a very carefully drawn-up statement, signed by some of our greatest divines in the year 1867. It carries the signatures of Dr. Liddon, Archdeacon Denison, Dr. Littledale, Mr. Mackonochie, Dr. Pusey, and many others. It is as follows:—

'Whereas at the present time imputations of disloyalty to the Church of England are current to the discredit of those who have been, some of them for many years, inculcating and defending the doctrines of

the Real Objective Presence, of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and of the Adoration of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; and whereas by reason of these imputations the minds of many are troubled; We, therefore, the undersigned, exercising the office of the priesthood within the Church of England, beg respectfully to state to your Grace, and through your Grace to our Right Rev. Fathers in God the Bishops of your Province, and to the Church at large, what we believe to be the mind of our Lord touching the said doctrines, as expressed in Holy Scripture, and as received by the Church of England in conformity with the teaching of the Catholic Church in those ages to which the Church of England directs us as "most pure and uncorrupt," and of "the old godly doctors" to whom she has in many ways referred us, declaring hereby both what we repudiate and what we believe, touching the said doctrines.

‘(1) We repudiate the opinion of a "Corporal Presence of Christ's natural Flesh and Blood"—that is to say, of the Presence of His Body and Blood as they "are in Heaven"; and the conception of the mode of His Presence which implies the physical change of the natural substances of Bread and Wine commonly called Transubstantiation.

‘We believe that in the Holy Eucharist, by virtue of the Consecration, through the power of the Holy Ghost, the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, "the inward Part, or Thing signified," are present, really and truly, but spiritually and ineffably, under

“the outward visible part or sign” or “form of Bread and Wine”.’ (Note here the allusion to the Catechism.)

I will read the rest of that declaration later on, when we come to another branch of the subject which it illustrates. I would only say now that the authorities on which this doctrine is based are, first, the Holy Scriptures, notably the sixth chapter of St. John—as to which I will ask you to notice that, as far as we know, the first person who ever doubted that this chapter of St. John referred to the Holy Communion was a cardinal of the Roman Church in the sixteenth century. Certainly the members of that Church will find it hard to reconcile this chapter with that strange and terrible mutilation to which their laymen have to submit in not receiving the Chalice as part of their rights and privileges. I do not think anything can be more monstrous than this depriving of the laity of their undoubted right, and dividing the Sacrament which Christ Himself ordained in two parts, whatever may be said of the doctrine of concomitance, on which this practice rests. Other passages in Holy Scripture are the Institution of the Holy Eucharist recorded by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Paul in 1 Corinthians x. and xi.

And then we have the testimony of the Fathers and of the Liturgies; also the testimony of the great English divines of the Reformation, notably of Hooker, who, whatever may be said as to the theory which he apparently held, yet used expressions of startling in-

tensity to describe his sense of the mysterious power entrusted to the priesthood in connection with this Sacrament.

That is as far as time allows me to go to-night in trying to show you the meaning of this great gift of the Eucharistic Presence to the Church.

II.

THE HOLY COMMUNION OUR CHRISTIAN SACRIFICE.

IN order to recall to your minds that which was said last week, I will read to you a short summary of the conclusions which I tried to bring out then, in the form of what I may call a comprehensive belief on the subject. I believe that the Holy Communion was ordained 'for the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby,' and that this 'remembrance' is, in the first place, a memorial before God, because Christ instituted, not only a remembrance of the Sacrifice to ourselves, but also a special mode of pleading it before God, whereby we offer the same Body once for all sacrificed for us, and the same Blood once for all shed for us, sacramentally present, to the Father. I believe that inasmuch as the Holy Communion is a Sacrament, it has an outward and an inward part; but I am further instructed by the Church Catechism that whereas Baptism has an outward *sign*, which is water, and an inward grace, which is new birth, Holy Communion has what Baptism has not, an inward part or thing signified: so that whereas the questions and answers

which have to do with the essential nature of Baptism are two, those which have to do with the essential nature of Holy Communion are three—that is to say, there is the outward sign of Bread and Wine, and there are the spiritual benefits, which are ‘the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ’; but there is also (that which is lacking in Baptism), an inward part, which is ‘the Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper’—a distinction which is represented in theology by the *Sacramentum*; the *Res Sacramenti* (that is, the Thing signified, which is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are taken as well as received—or, in the words of the Article, ‘which are given, taken, and eaten, by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper’); and the *Virtus Sacramenti* (that is, the spiritual feeding on Christ, whereby the faithful are made partakers of Christ): so that the gift bestowed in the Holy Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ, which are present really and truly, but spiritually and ineffably, under the outward visible part or sign of Bread and Wine. The manner of the Presence is mysterious, ineffable, and inconceivable by us, as it is in Heaven and there only that Christ is present according to the natural mode of His existence.

Now, to-day we must consider the Holy Communion as our Christian Sacrifice; and it may be asserted at once that the Church of England is less explicit about the Eucharistic Sacrifice than she is about the Real Presence—I am not concerned to deny it—

partly for this reason : because before the Reformation there was a great straining of the proportion of the Eucharistic doctrine in favour of the Sacrifice to the neglect of the Communion ; in fact, Communions at the time of the Reformation were exceedingly rare ; and this aspect of things is reflected in the formularies and doctrinal statements of the Prayer Book. Still the sacrificial aspect of the Holy Communion retains its legitimate place ; and I think that perhaps hardly enough is made of the extraordinary prominence assigned to this aspect of the Holy Communion in the Church Catechism which I have quoted more than once in these lectures. ✓

I repeat, I do not want anything stronger, or more explicit, than the words of our Catechism ; for you will remember that in answer to the question ‘Why was the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper ordained ?’ the answer given is this : ‘For the continual remembrance of the Sacrifice of the Death of Christ, and of the Benefits which we receive thereby,’ so assigning a place of the highest importance to the commemoration of the Sacrifice ; while in that particular place not one word is said about the Communion. Certainly, if in her anxiety to restore the Communion of the people—which, thank God! the Church of England has done—to its proper place, and to guard against mediæval misconceptions connected with the doctrine of sacrifice, our divines seemed to throw the sacrificial aspect into the background, yet most emphatically it is there. ‘But,’ you will say, ‘what is to be said as

to the 31st Article?' Let me read it to you. 'The Offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual [mark those words]; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it is commonly said, that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.'

This Article indubitably is intended to guard jealously—and we are all concerned in so guarding—the unique completeness of the one great Sacrifice once made for ever on the Cross; to guard it, moreover, not against any formulated doctrine such as that of the Council of Trent, but as against a current popular view—and if you know anything about what is commonly said to this day in ordinary books which the Roman Catholic authorities allow to be put out for the benefit of the uneducated (popular books, as they are called), you cannot doubt that the great truth does need guarding—for the Eucharist is not even a mystical renewal of Christ's death, but it is an act of cooperation with Christ's Heavenly intercession. Christ upon the Eucharistic Altar is only offered in the sense that His once-made Sacrifice is there perpetually presented and pleaded before the Father—'as in Heaven, so on earth'. The Altar is, so to speak, on a line, not with Calvary, but with the heavenly intercession. I am now using the words of the Bishop of

Worcester,¹ and he points out the same danger in another place which I will read to you. He says: 'On the other side we must be careful to vindicate the truth, that here we have no fresh sacrificing of Christ. Twice in the history of theology this truth seems to have been imperilled: first, in the period of the Middle Ages, when the view prevailed that the Sacrifice of the Altar was a distinct addition to the Sacrifice of the Cross; for while the Sacrifice of the Cross had been offered *once* for original sin, the Sacrifice of the Altar is offered *daily* for actual sin (you see how this very idea is combated in the words of the Article I have just read to you). And, secondly, in the modern development of the doctrine of the Eucharist Sacrifice in the Roman Church there has emerged again, and, alas! with increasing acceptance, the conception of a re-sacrificing of Christ—Christ, it is maintained, must subject Himself anew in some real way in each Mass to the humiliation of the Sacrifice. There is on each occasion a fresh self-emptying, so that each Mass shall be a fresh and substantive Sacrifice, distinct from, though dependent on, the Sacrifice of the Cross.'

So you see the danger combated in our Article is a real and a recurring danger. We maintain unflinchingly that there is only one Sacrifice, once offered for sins for ever—the one unique Sacrifice of the Cross which never can be repeated. If you wish to read this put into the simplest and plainest terms you will

¹ Since made first Bishop of Birmingham.

find it in your hymn books in the magnificent doctrinal hymn of the late Dr. Bright, whose first words are :—

Once, only once, and once for all,
His precious life He gave.

There you will find in a nutshell the true and real conception of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, wherein is maintained that great truth which we must never lose sight of—one Sacrifice, once offered, never to be repeated, by faith commemorated, and offered mystically on the altars of the Church.

Now, having shown you that the danger with which the Church of England had to contend was a very real danger, let me try and explain the meaning of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. And I must claim even an extra share of that attention which you have always so ungrudgingly given me; for you will readily see how extremely difficult a subject it is to make plain or even intelligible, because we are treading on the ground of marvellous mysteries which we have to accept rather than to understand. Let me try, then, to show what this doctrine means, and on what authority it rests, and what it is, and what is its practical meaning to us Churchmen. Let us ask then first of all a very simple and, I hope, a clear question. What is it that we mean by Sacrifice? Sacrifice has been defined to mean the act of offering or presenting an oblation before Almighty God; or it has been defined again as the spontaneous expression of the homage due from the creature to the Creator; or, if we take the definition of St. Augustine, a true sacrifice is 'every work

which is done that we may be united to God in sacred society or communion'. Now, I would ask you to notice this, that sacrifice is not necessarily connected with, does not necessarily imply—it has not appeared in any of these definitions, and it does not necessarily imply—the shedding of blood.

For instance, there was the Sacrifice of Melchisedec, which was bread and wine; and under the Levitical Law there was the sacrifice of flour, the sacrifice of bread and cakes, the essence of sacrifice being the inward disposition of devout, adoring homage and perfect self-surrender and dedication of the whole being to God; and notice, had there been no sin, there would apparently have been no need for any shedding of blood, but with sin, there came in the idea necessarily of reparation.

Henceforth, sacrifice involved the death of a living victim; and it would seem perhaps that Cain's great sin was the neglect of this, when he ventured to offer the fruits of the ground without blood, and so failed in his offering. Think what the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us: 'By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,' because he looked forward to the shedding of blood on the Cross of the Lamb of God Which came to take away the sins of the world. This principle was developed and systematised in the numerous sacrifices of the Levitical Law, which all, in turn, were gathered up in their several streams into the mystical sacrifice of the Cross. Here they pass into this one great Sacrifice, and then emerge

again quickened and spiritualised in the Sacrifice of the Altar.

You will see why we cannot give way for one moment to the foolish disparagement of the Old Testament which is so much the fashion now ; our Christian life is bound up in the Old Testament. 'Search the Scriptures,' said Christ, meaning the Old Testament ; 'because ye think that in them ye have eternal life.' 'And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.' It is one great system : Christianity goes back to the beginning ; Christianity begins in the Old Testament, and is perfected in the New.

I would ask you to look at all these Levitical sacrifices once more, converging on the Cross, passing through it, and coming out again in the Sacrifice of the Altar. See how St. Paul speaks of them when he parallels the daily offerings of the Law with the Church's perpetually celebrated Eucharist, when he says, 'Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils' ; and, 'Behold Israel after the flesh : are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the Altar ?'

Now carry back your thoughts, and look at those streams as they come flowing towards the Cross out of the Old Testament, and you will see they fall into three main channels. There are Burnt Offerings, Sin Offerings, and Peace Offerings. The Holy Eucharist, as did the Sacrifice of the Cross, represents all three ; that is to say, the Burnt Offering, the Sin Offering,

and the Peace Offering, pass into the Offering of Christ on the Cross, and emerge once more in the Sacrifice of the Altar. And in passing I should just like to explain briefly what I mean by this. In the Burnt Offering you remember the victim was wholly consumed; in the Sin Offering and in the Trespass Offering there was no partaking by the people, only by the priests; the Peace Offering was partaken of by priests and people both. Now, that the Sacrifice of the Cross continues is plain from these considerations: first, Christ being the Mediator between God and man, not only merits pardon, but He applies pardon; secondly, He is our Great High Priest, and therefore Himself needs to have something to offer (this is described in Hebrews x. 12 as the 'Sacrifice for ever,' the perpetual sacrifice). This same idea is further expressed in our frequent prayer, 'O Lamb of God, *That takest* away the sins of the world,' not '*That hast taken,*' but '*That takest*'. There is a further expression of this belief in the idea that Christ is the real Consecrator, in every Eucharist, in the persons of those authorised to celebrate in His Name—a truth set forth for us in the more simple and precise language of the Church Catechism: 'Bread and Wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received'; that is to say, that Bread and Wine over which Christ Himself has spoken the Words of Institution. And although in the Eucharist Christ's death is commemorated mystically by the separate consecration of Bread and Wine—first the Bread and then the Wine is

consecrated, mystically showing forth Christ's death thereby—yet the precise function of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, as has been pointed out by the Dean of Lichfield¹ (I shall carry your attention, I think, in this, because I believe he expounded it to you in the course of lectures given in this place), can best be explained from the analogy of the old sacrifices, and those five actions which he clearly pointed out as belonging to them. For you will notice that in the old sacrifices there were five actions. First—you will remember how he told you this—the introduction of the animal which was brought to be sacrificed, by the offerer; a man who had a sacrifice to offer brought the animal to the door of the congregation, which typified Christ's surrendering Himself in the eternal counsels of God.

Then there was the second action. The man who brought the animal to be sacrificed laid his hands on the head of the animal, thereby mystically transferring his sins to the head of the victim. So Christ substitutes Himself to bear the sins of the world—Christ 'His Own Self bare our sins in His Own Body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness'.

Then the third point was the slaying of the victim (the priest has not appeared at all yet), slain by the offerer, the man who brought the sacrifice, signifying death by sin, the sinner deserving death in the Lord's presence as a satisfaction to His holiness. So Christ died once for all, saying, 'It is finished'.

¹ Dr. Luckock.

Now comes the fourth action, and here the priest appears for the first time. The priest takes the blood of the animal which had been sacrificed and sprinkles it upon the Altar, or, once a year the high-priest sprinkles it on the Mercy-seat. So Christ presents Himself now in Heaven. His sacrificial life being begun, He takes, as it were, of that Blood which was once offered on Calvary, and pleads it before God in a perpetual pleading, where in Heaven He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Then there comes the fifth point, the consumption of the body of the victim, either by the offerer, or by the priest, or by priest and people. So in the Holy Communion Christ gives us of the Sacrifice to be our spiritual Food and Sustenance in that Holy Sacrament.

Now, it is the fourth point we must fasten on as our explanation of the great truth of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The presentation of Christ's sacrificial Blood began when He entered Heaven on the day of the Ascension, He being able to plead continually what the high-priest only did at intervals; and you will see how, in accordance with this, we recognise three oblations in the Holy Eucharist. First there is the offering of Bread and Wine made by the people. Just as in the old days the offerer brought his victim, so the people literally bring the Bread and Wine. That is probably the original meaning of the collection of money which is made in Church at the time of the Oblation. In old days the people used to provide the

Bread and Wine for the Eucharist, and gradually that became commuted into an offering of money. That offering of our money which we make—at the Offertory, as we call it—mystically represents the people bringing the Bread and Wine; just as of old the offerer brought the victim to the priest, so we bring the Bread and Wine out of which the Oblation is to be taken, which is presently to be offered; and if you go to Milan, you will see there in the remarkable rite of St. Ambrose that this action is still performed to this day. There are a certain number of old men and women from the School of St. Ambrose, who bring up loaves of bread, and wine, which are placed on the credence table, representing this old custom of the people supplying the Bread and Wine, just as in old days the offerer used to supply the victim. This is the first Oblation. Out of this the priest takes certain selected elements of Bread and Wine which he offers on the altar; that is the second oblation. Then there comes the third oblation, the offering of them after consecration, which is the true Sacrifice of the rite, which is set forth in that prayer which unfortunately now is misplaced (in the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. it took its place as part of the Consecration); ‘O Lord and heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain

remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee; humbly beseeching Thee, that all we, who are partakers of this holy Communion, may be fulfilled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service; not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by Whom, and with Whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.' So that it is true to say the Altar is, so to speak, on a line, not so much with Calvary as with the Heavenly intercession which is now continuously going on in Heaven. I have tried to put it as plainly as I can, and perhaps I may put it more plainly before we have done.

Now, you will say, what authority have I for this doctrine in Holy Scripture? There are two great passages: there is St. Luke xxii. 19 and 1 Corinthians xi. 26. The first of these contains the well-known words 'Do this in remembrance of Me'—or, as perhaps we ought rather to translate it, 'Do this as My memorial'; and I should like here to refer you to a famous charge by Bishop Hamilton on this point, from which I will read an extract later on.

It seems strange, however, to think that God needs

reminding. 'Do this as My memorial'—is there any meaning in asserting that this great Eucharistic Sacrifice is a memorial before God? If you ask nine people out of ten what it means—'Do this in remembrance of Me'—they would say at once: 'It is an invitation to the person who comes to the Holy Communion to join in the Sacrifice that he may remember—he, the offerer, may remember—what Christ did for him'. But this is not the only meaning of these words; the Person to be reminded by these words, wonderful and awful mystery as it is, is God Himself. 'Do this as My memorial.' It is to remind God; God, Who never slumbers or sleeps, God, Who holds in His hands the destiny of nations as well as the life of the smallest child, is to be reminded, as it were, of the great things that He has done for us in the past, is to be reminded by the offering of this great Sacrifice. And, if it should seem strange to think that the Omniscient God should need reminding; if you will look at Holy Scripture you will find that it is not by any means an isolated instance. God Himself has more than once ordained in unmistakable language that similar 'reminders'—if I may venture to use the word (I should rather have used the Greek, but to make it clear, I use the English)—should be addressed to Him. It was so with the rainbow in Gen. ix. 16—'I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth'. Again, you will remember how the rite of circumcision was the sign and token of the covenant

which God made with Abraham. It was to remind God. The blood of the Sacrifice was the great instrument of the Mosaic covenant, the sign, not only to man, but to God, the remembrance of its benefits and obligations to both parties to the covenant. Again, as a very remarkable instance, there was the Feast of the Trumpets, which you will find thus described in Numbers x. 10; 'That they may be to you for a memorial before your God. The trumpets were to be blown as a memorial before God, reminding one of the expression in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 'As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew [proclaim, that is] the Lord's Death'. There is further the example of the shewbread in Leviticus xxiv. 7.

The following quotation is from the charge of Bishop Hamilton: 'Now it is easy to understand how the offering of a memorial may be useful to men, but it does not seem to have any place in our worship of God; and yet it is true that God condescends to place Himself in this respect on a level with man. The testimony of the Word of God is most distinct on this matter.' He then quotes the instances of the rainbow and circumcision. 'With such a revelation of God's condescension towards His people, surely instead of our being surprised at being told that God is willing to be reminded of what His Son has done for us men and for our salvation, it should seem to us to be only according to the analogy of faith that our Lord should in His Own Person ever present the Sacrifice—that which was once for all offered up to God, as a sacrifice

for ever—and that His representatives here on earth should also plead in a way appointed by Himself, that same Sacrifice which the great Mediator evermore pleadeth in Heaven.'

I will give you another quotation from Bishop Harold Browne in his book on the Thirty-nine Articles : 'It (*i.e.* the Eucharist) was not only a remembrance to ourselves, it was also esteemed a special mode of pleading it before God, and therefore it was named a Sacrifice; and as the Sacrifice of the Cross was the propitiatory sacrifice, so this too was called a Sacrifice of Propitiation, both because of its recalling that great propitiatory Sacrifice, and because'—by feeding on Christ—'it was the means of bringing home to our souls . . . the propitiation for sins, which He wrought.'

As regards the passage in 1 Cor. xi. 26, the meaning would seem to be, 'Exhibit the memorial of Christ's Death until, at the end of the world, He comes out of the Holy of Holies, having finished the sacrificial pleading.' That is to say, we here commemorate His Death, we continue His Sacrifice.

Now, I should like to have said something about the testimony of the Primitive Church, but the time is almost expired. I will only quote a passage from a very important book on the Holy Eucharist by the late Archdeacon Robert Isaac Wilberforce, who sums up the position thus : 'It can hardly be disputed that there is no ancient writer whose subject leads him to speak of the Holy Communion who does not declare it to be a Sacrifice, who does not call the place an Altar

on which it is offered, and the person by whom it is presented, a priest'. This is supported by the language of St. Clement, St. Ignatius, Justin Martyr, and of those whose names are given in a long catena in the above-mentioned book of Archdeacon Wilberforce. So, too, in the language of the Council of Nicæa, 'Neither the Canon nor usage hath handed down, that those who have no power to offer, should give to those who offer the Body of Christ,' spoken of deacons giving the Eucharist to priests. There is also a large catena to be found of the testimony of the Caroline divines and others in the books above alluded to, including the statement of Hooker. This statement is discussed at length in Mr. Keble's book on Eucharistic Adoration, a subject on which I should like to have touched, had time permitted; but as it is I do not think I can do better now than to read to you once more from that same declaration I read to you last time, signed by Dr. Pusey, Dr. Liddon, Mr. Mac-konochie, and others, the statement they make on the Eucharistic Sacrifice. They say:—

'We repudiate the notion of any fresh sacrifice, or any view of the Eucharistic sacrificial offering as something apart from the One All-Sufficient Sacrifice and Oblation on the Cross which alone is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world both original and actual [you see how these words reappear in consequence of the old misunderstanding] which alone is meritorious. We believe that, as in Heaven Christ our great High

Priest ever offers Himself before the eternal Father, pleading by His Presence His sacrifice of Himself once offered on the cross; so on earth, in the Holy Eucharist, that same Body, once for all sacrificed for us, and that same Blood, once for all shed for us, sacramentally present, are offered and pleaded before the Father by the priest, as our Lord ordained to be done in remembrance of Himself, when He instituted the Holy Sacrament of His Body and Blood.'

There are just one or two practical conclusions I should like to put before you in the few minutes I have, in what I feel has been a very difficult subject, and one which I do not feel has been explained as clearly as it might have been; but it is a subject of great difficulty. Here we have the great service of the Church, the only service which Christ Himself ordained, wherein we are united to the grand service of Heaven. And so the late Dr. Milligan, that learned Presbyterian divine, tells us that we cannot look on the Holy Eucharist as a service which might have been otherwise in the counsels of God, for it is linked on to the service of Heaven, and is, he admits, the central part of the worship of the Church if she wishes to be united with that worship. Therefore this great service should always form part of our Sunday worship, our festival worship, and, if possible, of our daily worship. And, for ourselves, inasmuch as it is the great Burnt Offering, so we should learn to offer ourselves in complete detachment from sin and in absolute devotion. Surely it is our hope that it may

make us men of another world, give us an idea of what is meant by self-surrender, as we see that Victim offered up in complete submission to God. And inasmuch as it is our sin offering, how emphatically does it speak to us of the power of intercession! So Tertullian deprecates any violence being shown to the Christians. He tells the heathen Emperor that the Christians are much too valuable that he should kill them, for they are doing the empire a great service, and in killing them he will deprive the world of real blessings which they obtain from Heaven. And it is also our peace offering. Perhaps we think more of it as a peace offering than as a sin offering, that which the soul can offer when it is at peace with God. But we must never forget that (and here we add to the joy of the saints) it is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving in which the Church pours herself out in the fullness of adoration and joy. I do not know any words more marvellous in their way than those in the old hymn of the Church, in which, having exhausted every other subject of adoration, the Church pours herself out in that expression of the purest devotion: 'We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory'.

III.

PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION.

WE reach to-night the third of our subjects. We have tried to see what is meant by the doctrine of our Blessed Lord's Presence in the Holy Communion; we tried last time to examine the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice; and now we are trying to-night to investigate what is meant by Preparation for the worthy receiving of this blessed and wonderful Sacrament, or in one word we might call our present subject 'The Worthy Communicant'.

Of late there has been a very great increase in the number—thank God for it!—of Communicants and in the frequency of Communion and the number of Celebrations in the Church of England. It is a strange reaction, after the neglect which reached to such a pitch that it actually elevated what is in itself a very beautiful Divine Office into the place of the Holy Eucharist. The Divine Office, beautiful as it is, cannot be traced as publicly recited in church until the fourth century. But until quite lately, with a great number of people, the morning service was simply the Divine Office put in the place of that which

ought to be first, the Holy Eucharist. And this state of things existed side by side with the fact that there was almost an extinction of the Holy Communion as a service at all, which was symbolised by the fact (which I suppose few of you remember, except the older among you) that in some Prayer Books of fifty or sixty years ago the Office for Holy Communion, or, at any rate, the last part of it, was printed in small type, as if it were a thing only occasionally used, and only for a very few people. Simultaneously, once more, there existed a dread of receiving the Holy Communion, such as I found traces of in my old Gloucestershire parish thirty years ago; there I found an idea lingering among the old people that there was no forgiveness at all for sin committed after a Communion; they thought that if any one were to make his Communion and then fall into sin, there was no forgiveness for such an one. So as a consequence of this the Holy Communion was deferred as far as possible until the very end of life, to be received at the last as a sort of charm before death, and so it was kept back from the young and from all those with the temptations and difficulties of life before them. Now, as you know, that is all changed. Celebrations of the Holy Communion, thank God! are wonderfully frequent and immensely multiplied. Think only of this cathedral within living memory. Archbishop Temple used to say that he remembered the time when he came to this cathedral and he was asked by the virger, in the terms which they used to use in those days, whether

'he was going to stay,' because, the virger said, if he did, it would give the Minor Canon the trouble of celebrating. And whereas a Communion was then a rare event to be deferred as long as possible, no undue excitement or anything which seemed to militate against the quietness necessary for its reception was allowed to interfere, and it was jealously guarded afterwards by an interval between it and ordinary life—so again all this is changed; men and women, boys and girls trip in and out with or without preparation; theatre at night, Holy Communion in the morning, religion and gaiety jostling each other very closely.

Of course, to take this line, as I said in my first lecture, does presuppose the right, the absolutely right, frame of mind, that, whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we are able to do all to the glory of God. But still it is a very difficult position, although it is the right one. Therefore the question for us to ask ourselves in the face of all this is: Are we doing enough (to use the old Scotch phrase) to 'fence the tables?' I mean, are we making use of what we have got? (for one does shrink more than one can say from any more experiments with the Prayer Book). Are we keeping to what we have got? Are we making the most of what we have in the Prayer Book? Are we keeping up the preparation which is there very definitely laid down? You know that the service designed, as I say, only as a subsidiary office, overwhelmed the Liturgy. Does the Liturgy now once more rest upon its proper base and receive

its due protection from the barriers which were designed to hedge it in ?

I have already noticed two things, and I fear a third. The two things that are obviously noticeable are, first, an apparent want of purpose among our people—spasmodic Communion; whereas surely a Communion is too great a thing to be lightly taken up or let alone. It was the Père Lacordaire who said, ‘It is impossible to estimate the effect of one Communion less in the life of a Christian’; and yet how easily we come to Communion or stay away, as the whim seizes us. The second thing I have noticed is an attempt to minimise, or cut away, all the penitential parts of our Liturgy. There is, for instance, the penitential opening of the Liturgy. Now, I cannot acquiesce, for one moment, in the attacks made in some quarters, by people who do not think deeply, on the Ten Commandments occupying as they do the position in the forefront of our service. Personally I am glad they are there. I cannot regard it, for instance, as some people say with something like profanity, as comparable to reading the Riot Act before the service. I cannot say that they can only be used under protest. You know how they came there; they were put there in the revision of 1552, and whether the revisers of that time meant it or not, they thereby revived the primitive Old Testament Lection. In many of the old Liturgies there used to be three lections—one from the Gospels, one from the Epistles, and a lection out of the Old Testament. At Milan, at the present day, in the rite

of St. Ambrose, you will find there are the three lections. And as there used to be this liturgical custom, to read a lection out of the Old Testament, so one is glad to see thus preserved, if only by a side-wind, this Old Testament Lection, in the Ten Commandments; and besides that, personally, I do feel that the Commandments, occupying the place they do, are of the greatest spiritual service, and I think they ought to be a real help in our spiritual life. I think they are a useful reminder to our people of the needs which we have and of the sins we have committed. I should like, then, to read to you just briefly some words in which Dr. Liddon described his idea of the Ten Commandments. He said: 'The Ten Commandments are at this moment the moral rule of Christendom, and contain in a compendious form an exhaustive statement of human duty towards the Author of our being, and towards our fellow-creatures. What, therefore, can be a more appropriate place than that which they occupy at the beginning of the solemn service of the Holy Communion?' I think it would be a distinct spiritual loss—I say nothing of any other reasons—if we were to cut off the penitential opening of our service, it may be just to save five minutes, if possible, to make room for those prolonged private devotions which are often such a great trial to the ordinary layman, and as to which I think the clergy are at times unduly selfish.

The third point I would notice at some length, as the main subject of my lecture to-night—is not an open, but yet a possible, danger. I speak in this way

because no one has a right to take for granted the absence of preparation, especially where so much is being done and where the subject is one of such well-known difficulty; but those who are our ordinary Communicants—are they doing enough to prepare for their Communion? Are we doing enough in systematic preparation, by self-examination, by confession of sins according to the directions of the well-known Exhortation in the Prayer Book given to those coming to the Holy Communion? We move at such a speed that there seems to be no time for anything, and therefore I am afraid that this Exhortation is one of the things that, because of the hurry and rush of the day, we seldom hear read. So pardon me if I read it to you.

‘Dearly beloved, I purpose, through God’s assistance, to administer to all such as shall be religiously and devoutly disposed the most comfortable Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; to be by them received in remembrance of His meritorious Cross and Passion; whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven. Wherefore it is our duty to render most humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God our Heavenly Father, for that He hath given His Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual Food and Sustenance in that holy Sacrament. Which being so divine and comfortable a thing to them who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them that will presume to receive it unworthily; my duty is to exhort you in the mean season to consider the dignity of that holy

mystery, and the great peril of the unworthy receiving thereof; and so to search and examine your own consciences (and that not lightly, and after the manner of dissemblers with God; but so), that ye may come holy and clean to such a heavenly Feast, in the marriage-garment required by God in Holy Scripture, and be received as worthy partakers of that Holy Table.'

Note what follows. 'The way and means thereto is; First, to examine your lives and conversations by the rule of God's commandments; and whereinsoever ye shall perceive yourselves to have offended, either by will, word, or deed, there to bewail your own sinfulness, and to confess yourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life. And if ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only against God, but also against your neighbours; then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them; being ready to make restitution and satisfaction, according to the uttermost of your powers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other; and being likewise ready to forgive others that have offended you, as ye would have forgiveness of your offences at God's hand: for otherwise the receiving of the Holy Communion doth nothing else but increase your damnation. Therefore if any of you be a blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of His Word, an adulterer, or be in malice, or envy, or in any other grievous crime, repent you of your sins, or else come not to that holy Table; lest, after the taking of that holy Sacrament, the devil enter

into you, as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all iniquities, and bring you to destruction both of body and soul.

‘And because it is requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God’s mercy, and with a quiet conscience; therefore if there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience herein, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other discreet and learned Minister of God’s Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God’s holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.’

There would seem to have grown up an idea, comparatively lately, that Absolution—please mark the terms, I am trying to use them closely—that Absolution is certainly a vital matter, but that this Absolution can be had by running in, so to speak, under the public Absolutions at Morning and Evening Service and Holy Communion. Now, as to this, I should think that there was little or no doubt that the Absolutions in Morning and Evening Service and the Holy Communion are real Absolutions, that they are a real exercise of the power of Absolution which God gave to His Church; but they are intended primarily to apply to the services in which they are placed—‘that those things may please Him which we do at this present’. They may rather remind us of what took

place before the Last Supper. When our Lord came to that Supper, you remember how He girded Himself with a towel and began to wash His disciples' feet; and you will remember how St. Peter remonstrated with Him, and said, 'Thou shalt never wash my feet,' and our Lord replied, 'He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit'. ✓

are So I venture to think that the Absolutions in the Morning and Evening Services and at Holy Communion are like our Lord's washing the feet of those who have previously been bathed and washed by a thorough and real penitence before they came there; and they are placed in these services because to approach God is always such a solemn and awful thing, that whenever and however we approach Him there may well be the sprinkling of Absolution applied even to those who, it may be, have just made a private and solemn act of penitence in their own person. Bearing out what I have said, we find in the service of the Roman Mass that when any are about to communicate although, *ex hypothesi*, they have been obliged to go to what is technically known as 'Confession,' yet confession is still made in their names, just as in our own Church, by the Celebrant, who afterwards gives them Absolution in these words: 'Almighty God pardon and pity you and make you free from your sins, and bring you to everlasting life,' followed by another prayer in which the word 'Absolution' is used. And I venture to say further, that it would be quite possible, but extremely difficult, so to awaken our contrition as

to obtain thereby what the Church of England seems to call the 'benefit of Absolution,' something peculiar and in addition to the more ordinary forgiveness to be obtained by earnest confession of our own sins to God, without the intervention of His minister, which, we must remember, the Church of England regards as quite sufficient, in the Exhortation which I have just read to you—when a man can so satisfy his conscience without that help, or without further comfort or counsel.

In defence of this point, which I know is a disputed one, as to the phrase 'the benefit of Absolution,' may I be allowed to refer to some remarks of Canon Carter?—'A most important part of the doctrine of Absolution relates to the modes of its administration. A distinction has always been observed between the general and special, or, to speak according to the modern usage, the public and private forms, the latter being regarded as the more complete application of the ministry. This special or individual form has, in all ages, been confined to the special ministry of penance; though at the beginning administered in public, it was afterwards appropriated by imposition of hands, and given only with special confession. Our Church in her expositions has been careful to preserve the distinctive character, and so, the peculiar virtues of this individual Absolution. She speaks, for instance, to regular church-goers—that is, persons in the habit of receiving general Absolutions—of the benefit of Absolution as something in addition to and to be

obtained only by special confession; she desires her priests to absolve the sick in special confession, though they may be just about to receive the Holy Eucharist, in which a general Absolution is administered. Again the Homily which affirms ecclesiastical discipline to be a note of the true Church, contrasts Absolution with excommunication. . . . Again, the Homily which describes Absolution as having the promise of the forgiveness of sins, speaks of the imposition of hands as its "visible sign"—a characteristic which can attach only to its original form.'

My main contention is that the Church of England supposes, when she pronounces her Absolutions in church, that she has done so over people who are already penitent, and who are already forgiven; that is to say, either they have confessed their sins to God in the quiet of their own rooms, with contrition and deep sorrow, and with full purpose of amendment of life, and have received that pardon which He knows how to give; or else that they have confessed them to God in the same way, and have received Absolution at the hands of His priest. Both the one and the other—viz. he who is satisfied with the private confession and he who is not satisfied, but needs the special confession—are absolved again for the purpose of the service; my contention being that we ought to insist more on the private preparation with its accompanying act of penitence, whatever it may be; that which goes on in what the Exhortation calls 'the meantime,' that is, before we come to the service itself.

And I would have you notice that in that much-quoted passage in the first Prayer Book of Edward VI. we find the same thing. The general confession in the church is there associated with a personal confession to God in these terms: 'Requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient for the quietness of their own consciences particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God and their general confession to the Church'.

There we get the two confessions. However this may be, perhaps it will not be amiss just to take a glance, and it must be only a glance in the short time left to us, at the penitential system of the Church. For however much we may differ as to the modes and methods of confession, there is no doubt about this, that confession of some sort, either mediately or immediately, is necessary, and that it should be urged on every one not to come to the Holy Communion unless they have made their peace with God, either in private by themselves, or else with the help of those whom God Almighty has set over them in the Lord. They are words in God's inspired Book: 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness'; and so you will find this duty asserted at many other parts of the service, especially in those sentences which are

appointed to be read at the Morning and Evening Services.

Now, as to confession, it seems to be a natural instinct in relieving a burdened conscience. We find the first mention of it, I suppose, as early as the third chapter of Genesis, verses 9-13: 'And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, Who told thee that thou was naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.' There we have God Almighty in the early beginnings calling on Adam to make a special confession of his sin. We have the same thing in the fourth chapter, verses 9 and 10 embodying generally the real principle of confession. As we go on there is no express enactment establishing confession in the Mosaic Law, but only regulations which imply the previously existing practice, in this respect ranking with sacrifice, with which under the Law it is closely connected. Hooker says the Jews held no repentance for sin to be available without confession, either conceived in the mind or uttered. He distinguishes three kinds of confession which were made: one for, or severally by, each of the people for himself,

and by the priest for them all on the great Day of Atonement ; secondly, the voluntary confessions which they made at all times when their consciences troubled them ; and thirdly, the special confessions prescribed by the Law which they in their books called confession of that particular fault for which we naturally seek pardon of God's hands. There are examples of this in Numbers v. 7, Leviticus v. 5, and for such sins special sacrifices were offered, the offender laying his hand on the head of the sacrifice and making the confession. Finally, he says there was no man either condemned to suffer death or corrected, but they called on him to repent and confess his sins. We have the well-known example in Joshua vii. 19, in the case of Achan : ' Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto Him ; and tell me now what thou hast done ; hide it not from me '. And then again we must notice that the solemn Paschal Offering, and the annual Day of Atonement with its confession of sins, and regular daily morning and evening sacrifices, were not sufficient ; each separate offender must seek his atonement in special sacrifice ; one sacrifice for the priest (Leviticus iv. 3), one for the ruler (Leviticus iv. 22), one for one of the common people (Leviticus iv. 27), one for ordinary defilements (Leviticus v. 1, 10).

So when we come to the Christian system we here again find no express enactments ; perhaps we may say that confession appears at the opening of the

Gospel as a practice already existing, stamped with Divine approval, when we read of those who came to be baptised in Jordan confessing their sins. Then we have the commission of the priesthood in St. John xx. 21, 22, 23: 'As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained,' which involved, as you will see, confession—remitting, or at least retaining, sins being only possible when they have been laid bare. And then we have it again in the faintest way in the Acts, or even more indistinctly still in St. James v. 13-16: 'Confess your sins one to another'.

Holy Scripture, it has been said, leaves the question of confession in the most general terms, affirming its principle and Divine origin, but defining nothing as to the occasion, or the details of its practice. For the solution of such questions we must refer to the usage of the Church. Now, the penitential system of the Church is a very long and complicated subject, and it would be quite impossible in the short time I have left to go into it to-night. As I told you just now, it was first of all public, although this public confession must have involved previous private confession both full and minute; and by the beginning of the eighth century public and private confession (I am omitting now the long and interesting details of its difficult history) became more and more distinct. The public

confession was reserved for open and notorious sinners, and the private confession was reserved for secret sins, and gradually the public penance became more and more rare—although the Reformed Prayer Book expresses a desire for it in the Communion Service—until the next stage was reached, when in 1215 at the fourth Lateran Council a canon was issued that everybody must be compelled to make a confession at least once a year; and at the Council of Trent, which commenced in 1545, the Sacrament of Penance, of which confession was a part, was further elaborated. At the Reformation the attitude taken was very much what is described in that extract from Edward VI's first Prayer Book which I read just now: 'Requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general confession, not to be offended with them that do use to their further satisfying the auricular and secret confession to the priest; nor those also which think needful or convenient for the quietness of their own consciences particularly to open their sins to the priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble confession to God, and the general confession to the Church'.

To put it shortly, the 'must' of the unreformed Church was turned into the 'may' of the reformed Church. And if compulsory confession was most certainly abolished—as it was abolished in the Church of England at the Reformation; so most certainly there was no order issued then—very much the contrary—for compulsory non-confession. In the Prayer Book there are four familiar places where we find it

treated. There is the Exhortation which I read to you just now; there is the Visitation of the Sick, with which you are familiar and which you can refer to for yourselves—I have no time to do more than mention it; there is the 113th Canon, a part of which runs in this way: ‘Provided always that if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the Minister for the unburthening of his conscience and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind from him, we do not any way bind the said Minister, but do straitly charge and admonish him that he do not at any time reveal and make known to any person whatsoever, any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy, except they be such crimes as by the law of this realm his own life may be called into question’; then there is the Homily on Repentance, which says: ‘If any do find themselves troubled in conscience they may repair to their curate or pastor or to some other learned godly man and show the trouble and doubt on their consciences to him, that they may receive at his hands the . . . healing of God’s Word’.

Some years ago, in 1873, there was a great deal of trouble, as there always will be on this point, by reason of its great importance, and the following declaration was drawn up and signed by many whose names are well known to you.

DECLARATION ON CONFESSION, 1873.

1. We believe and profess, that Almighty God has promised forgiveness of sins, through the precious

Blood of Jesus Christ, to all who turn to Him, with true sorrow for sin, out of unfeigned and sincere love to Him, with full purpose of amendment of life, and lively faith in Jesus Christ.

2. We also believe and profess, that our Lord Jesus Christ has instituted in His Church a special means for remission of sin after Baptism, and for the relief of consciences, which special means the Church of England retains and administers as part of her Catholic heritage.

3. We affirm that—to use the language of the Homilies—‘Absolution hath the promise of forgiveness of sin,’¹ although ‘by the express word of the New Testament it hath not this promise annexed and tied to the visible sign, which is imposition of hands,’ and ‘therefore,’ as it is said, ‘Absolution is no such Sacrament as Baptism and the Communion are’.²

We cannot admit, that the Church of England in Article XXV. condemns the ministry of Absolution any more than she condemns the rites of Confirmation and Ordination, which she solemnly administers. We believe that God, through Absolution, confers an inward spiritual grace and His assurance of forgiveness on those who receive it with faith and repentance, as in Confirmation and Ordination He confers grace on those who rightly receive the same.

4. In our Ordination, as Priests of the Church of England, the words of our Lord to His Apostles—‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained’—were applied to us individually. Thus it appears, that the Church of England considers this Commission to be, not a tem-

¹ Homily, ‘Of Common Prayer and Sacraments’.

² *Ibid.*

porary endowment of the Apostles, but a gift lasting to the end of time. It was said to each of us, 'Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the Imposition of our hands'; and then followed the words, 'Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained'.¹

5. The only form of words provided for us in the Book of Common Prayer for applying this absolving power to individual souls runs thus: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath left power to His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.'²

Upon this we remark, first, that in these words forgiveness of sins is ascribed to Him Who, as God, forgives sins, our Lord Jesus Christ; yet that the Priest, acting by a delegated authority and as an instrument, does through these words convey the absolving grace; and secondly, that the absolution from sins cannot be understood to be the removal of any censures of the Church, because (*a*) the sins from which the penitent is absolved are presupposed to be sins known previously to himself and God only, (*b*) the words of the Latin form relating to those censures are omitted in our English form, and (*c*) the release from excommunication is in Article XXXIII. reserved to 'a Judge that hath authority thereunto'.

6. This provision, moreover, shows that the Church of England, when speaking of 'the benefit of absolu-

¹ 'The Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests.'

² 'The Order for the Visitation of the Sick.'

tion,' and empowering her Priests to absolve, means them to use a definite form of absolution, and did not merely contemplate a general reference to the promise of the Gospel.

7. In the Service for 'The Visitation of the Sick' the Church of England orders that the sick man shall even 'be moved to make a special Confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter'. When the Church requires that the sick man should, in such case, be moved to make a special confession of his sins, we cannot suppose her thereby to rule that her members are bound to defer to a death-bed (which they may never see) what they know to be good for their souls. We observe that the words 'be moved to' were added in 1662, and that therefore at the last revision of the Book of Common Prayer the Church of England affirmed the duty of exhorting to confession in certain cases even more strongly than at the date of the Reformation.

8. The Church of England also, holding it 'requisite that no man should come to the Holy Communion, but with a full trust in God's mercy, and with a quiet conscience,' commands the minister to bid 'any' one who 'cannot quiet his own conscience herein,' to come to him, or 'to some other discreet Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with,' and therefore as distinct from, 'ghostly counsel and advice';¹ and since she directs that this invitation should be repeated in giving warning of Holy Communion, and Holy Communion is constantly offered to all, as the most precious of the means of grace, it follows that the use of Confession may be, at least in some cases, of not unfrequent occurrence.

¹ Exhortation in the Service for the Holy Communion.

9. We believe that the Church left it to the conscience of individuals, according to their sense of their needs, to decide whether they would confess or not, as expressed in that charitable Exhortation in the first English Prayer Book, 'requiring such as shall be satisfied with a general Confession, not to be offended with them that do use, to their further satisfying, the auricular and secret Confession to the Priest; nor those also, which think needful or convenient, for the quietness of their own consciences, particularly to open their sins to the Priest, to be offended with them that are satisfied with their humble Confession to God and the general Confession to the Church: but in all things to follow and keep the rule of charity; and every man to be satisfied with his own conscience, not judging other men's minds or consciences; whereas he hath no warrant of God's Word to the same'. And although this passage was omitted in the second Prayer Book, yet that its principle was not repudiated may be gathered from the 'Act for the Uniformity of Service' (1552), which, while authorising the second Prayer Book, asserts the former book to be agreeable to the Word of God, and the primitive Church.

10. We would further observe, that the Church of England has nowhere limited the occasions upon which her Priests should exercise the office which she commits to them at their ordination; that to command her Priests in two of her offices to hear confessions, if made, cannot be construed negatively into a command not to receive confessions on any other occasions. But, in fact, since the Christian ought to live in continual preparation for Holy Communion and for death, the two occasions specified do practically comprise the whole of his adult life. It is notorious that a long succession of Divines of great repute in the Church of England, from the very time when the English Prayer Book was

framed, speak highly of Confession, without limiting the occasions upon which, or the frequency with which, it should be used; and the 113th Canon, framed in the Convocation of 1603, recognised Confession as a then existing practice, in that it decreed under the severest penalties that 'if any man confess his secret and hidden sins to the Minister, the said Minister shall not at any time reveal or make known to any person whatsoever, any crime or offence so committed to his trust and secrecy, except they be such crimes as by the laws of this realm his own life may be called into question for concealing the same'.

11. While then we hold that no Priest is justified in requiring private Confession as a condition of receiving Holy Communion, we also hold that all who, under the circumstances above stated, claim the privilege of private Confession are entitled to it, and that the Clergy are directed under certain circumstances to 'move' persons to such confession. In insisting on this, as the plain meaning of the authorised language of the Church of England, we believe ourselves to be discharging our duty as her faithful Ministers.

ASHWELL, A. R., Canon of Chichester.

BAKER, HENRY W., Vicar of Monkland.

BARTHOLOMEW, C. C., Vicar of Cornwood, and
Rural Dean of Plympton.

BENSON, R. M., Incumbent of Cowley St. John,
Oxford.

BUTLER, WILLIAM J., Vicar of Wantage, and
Rural Dean.

CARTER, T. T., Rector of Clewer.

CHAMBERS, J. C., Vicar of St. Mary, Soho.

CHURTON, EDW., Rector of Crayke, and Arch-
deacon of Cleveland.

DENISON, GEORGE A., Vicar of East Brent, and
Archdeacon of Taunton.

GALTON, J. L., Rector of St. Sidwell's, Exeter.

GILBERTSON, LEWIS, Rector of Bramston.

GREY, FRANCIS R., Rector of Morpeth.

GRUEBER, C. L., Vicar of St. James's, Ham-
bridge.

KEBLE, THOMAS, jun., Vicar of Bisley.

KING, EDWARD, D.D., Canon of Christ Church,
Oxford.

LIDDELL, ROBERT, Incumbent of St. Paul's,
Knightsbridge.

LIDDON, H. P., D.D., Canon of St. Paul's,
London.

MACCOLL, M., Rector of St. Botolph, Billings-
gate.

MACKONCHIE, A. H., Perpetual Curate of St.
Alban's, Holborn.

MAYOW, M. W., Rector of Southam, and Rural
Dean.

MEDD, P. G., Senior Fellow of University College,
Oxford.

MURRAY, F. H., Rector of Chislehurst.

PUSEY, E. B., D.D., Canon of Christ Church,
Oxford.

RANDALL, R. W., Incumbent of All Saints',
Clifton.

SHARP, JOHN, Vicar of Horbury.

SKINNER, JAMES, Vicar of Newland, Great
Malvern.

WHITE, G. C., Vicar of St. Barnabas', Pimlico.

WILLIAMS, G., Vicar of Ringwood.

WILSON, R. F., Vicar of Rownhams, Southampton.

There, then, I will leave the matter. One thing I
plead for, that we do remember what a wonderful

privilege we have in being allowed to approach so frequently the Holy Communion; and I would ask you to carry away in your minds the old Liturgical words—although perhaps it is only a secondary meaning which I now attach to them: ‘Holy things for holy people’ (*Sancta Sanctis*).

IV.

THE EUCHARISTIC LIFE.

WE reach now our last lecture, which is entitled : ‘The Eucharistic Life’. And I will endeavour, very briefly, to sum up the points to which we have arrived. We have tried to see how the Holy Communion is our Food, and in stating this I endeavoured to distinguish the old idea—I mean the idea of the last century in England—that It was not so much our Food as a sort of reward for those who had fought the battle and journeyed the road; and I tried to show you the reason why It is our Food, because of that great inward part which underlies the Sacramentum, or outward sign, which is the ‘Body and Blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord’s Supper’. Then I tried to show you in what sense this Holy Communion is a Sacrifice, distinguishing It very carefully from any idea of a renewed sacrifice, showing you the connection it had with the one great Sacrifice once offered for all; and recommending you to study a careful enunciation of that doctrine in that hymn :—

Once, ~~only once~~, and once for all,
His precious life He gave;

and I tried to show you from the analogy of Jewish sacrifices, more especially emphasising the blood of the sprinkling, in what sense the Holy Communion is still that real Sacrifice which we plead in connection with and in union with the solemn pleading of Christ in Heaven. Last time I tried to show you the necessity for preparation, if we are to receive the benefits which come to us from the Sacrifice—viz. the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the Body and Blood of Christ; and we tried to take a look into the ancient penitential system of the Church, seeing how it was based on Holy Scripture, and also the modern system; and how necessary preparation is in accordance with the directions of the Prayer Book.

Now, to-night, we enter for a few moments on an investigation of what I venture to call the Eucharistic Life; and I would ask you to see with me how the Holy Communion ought to enter into our very life and become part and parcel of it. There are some beautiful words to which I have already referred, and which I will now read to you, by Dr. Milligan, a Presbyterian divine, a man of wonderful gifts and wonderful spiritual penetration. He says: 'The worship of the Christian Church is thus, again, no mere independent arrangement provided by the goodness of God to guide us to communion with Him; it is no mere token of His love which might have been replaced by another equally precious and effective; it flows from communion with the Father through the Son as an already existing

reality, and it is because it flows from that communion that it leads us to it. Hence it is that from the beginning of our history the Church has instinctively regarded the Sacrament of Holy Communion as the central act of her worship. The statements of the New Testament with regard to the religious exercises of Christians, that they met together for worship, followed as they are by the earliest accounts of those assemblies preserved for us in Christian history, leave no possibility of disputing the fact. The question is, how are we to explain it? and the only answer that can be given is that in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the Church realised to a greater extent than in many other of her ordinances her own deepest—that is, her sacrificial—life in her glorified Lord and His peculiar Presence with her as her nourishment, strength, and joy. She lived in Him as glorified. And so the Church was led to her view of the Eucharist; because the Communion Table was more than any other spot the meeting-place of Heaven and earth where the King met His guests in close and common fellowship and with richer than common blessing.'

Hence, you see, this Holy Communion is, as he tells us, the centre of all Church life, and therefore no Sunday, and no festival, is really complete without the Eucharist forming part of it, as an act of intercession, and also as an act of thanksgiving to Almighty God in union with that great Intercession which our High Priest pleads in Heaven, and in union with the Eucharist which is incessantly offered there before the

Throne of God by our High Priest, Who has passed within the veil. Thank God, there are few Churches now in this England of ours where the Holy Eucharist does not form part of the worship on Sunday. A Sunday without its Eucharist would be a perfect anomaly, altogether failing to be understood by the early Christians in their piety.

It fell to my lot to witness at the time of the first Jubilee of her late Majesty the lighting of the beacon fires, starting from the highest summit of the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire and spreading from height to height. It was a wonderful sight, this lighting of the beacons, and perhaps an idea even more wonderful than the sight was there suggested. You know how it comes to us from the old times, when the beacon was the means of flashing the news of deliverance, or signalling the call to defence. See how one hill takes up the light and another takes it up, and it is flashed and flashed to the end of the kingdom with the great news of deliverance or the urgent summons for succour. It was used either at the time of some extreme national danger or at a time of some great national rejoicing; and as at a time like that a summit which should be unlit and uncrowned by its coronal of fire would be a break in the continuous stream of rejoicing flashed from summit to summit and from county to county—so too is a Church without its Eucharist. It is like a beacon which has failed to flash out that glorious news which is signalled to us from Heaven, that our High Priest ever lives to

make intercession for us, and there ever pleads before the Throne of God.

You have, I dare say, in this city before now listened on Christmas Eve to the bells as they ring out the glorious news as it comes to us year after year, that a Saviour is born of a Virgin, in the recurring commemoration of Christmas ; you have heard steeple after steeple take up the sound until the whole city rings with melody, pouring out from the belfries until the whole air throbs again with sounds of rejoicing and thanksgiving. So is this commemoration which we offer in our churches. Church after church takes it up, linked together in one sacred bond of union and fellowship, taking up the glorious news, thanking God for what He has done : 'Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.'

And you know how this has become for some years—in our anxiety to make this Church of England of ours live more fully even than it does now—an urgent question which many have asked themselves : How can we best make the Holy Communion, with our modern ideas, our modern customs, our modern laxity, our modern ways—how can we make it the great service of Sunday ? how can we make it take its place, its proper place, on Sunday ?

There have been many schemes propounded, some rather hastily, some perhaps not effecting what they

were meant to accomplish. I never could quite understand, for my part, how the Holy Communion would become the great service of Sunday simply by bringing the Eucharist to the people; I think we want to bring the people to the Eucharist. I do not think we shall make the Holy Communion the chief service on Sunday merely by planting it down, as it were, before the congregation assembled at a particular moment, at a particular hour of the day, as something which they must join in whether they like it or not. I think the Holy Eucharist is to be made the great service of Sunday by making people feel that it is the principal service of the day, so that they are drawn to it and attracted to it; and not by placing it before them without due preparation on their part, and with no proper recognition of the tremendous realities which are therein put before them. There is one consideration which we are bound to recognise. If you have studied at all that which stands out with such extraordinary vitality from the earliest records of the Christian Church, you will see there is always an idea of mystery which we cannot and must not deny to this holy service. It is called in our Prayer Book, 'those Holy Mysteries'.

I suppose there is nothing more striking in its way than what has been called the 'reserve' which belonged emphatically to the ancient Church. It extended to the pictures which they painted in the catacombs; it extended even to the way in which they offered their prayers; and is especially remarkable

in the way they guarded and safeguarded the Holy Mysteries of the Altar. We find that same spirit of reserve in mediæval churches, we may see it to this day in some of our great cathedrals and parish churches—the long aisles, the rails, the screens, the mystery, the gloom, the Altar hidden away behind veil and barrier—all speaking of the intense reverence, the supreme mystery, which hang around this sacred rite. And if you study the ancient Liturgies, which go back, in their structure and feeling at all events, almost to the times, if not quite to the times, of the Apostles themselves, there you will be struck again by the frequent expulsions; first this class of people was driven out, then that, the catechumens, the energumens, those who were not prepared, those who were not permitted to be there. The greatest possible reverence and care was taken to preserve the sanctity and dignity of this great Mystery.

Therefore I think that in doing everything we can to make people realise that this is the great service of Sunday we must be careful not to do anything to take down that barrier of reverence which the Church has put round this Holy Sacrament, as Moses was ordered to put barriers round the Mount of Sinai. We must be careful not to familiarise our people with these Holy Mysteries in any way which would make them forget the intense and awful mystery which hangs about them, or the great care and reverence with which we must always approach this sacred rite which the Church has always guarded as her most precious inheritance,

In considering this particular point, before we go on, I think it would be only reasonable that I should try and say something about a subject which, I think, we are all interested in, and which is a subject of very real importance to us who wish to make the Holy Communion the great service of Sunday. What am I to do, for instance, if I have received the Holy Communion in the early morning, when I find myself present at a great act of worship in the middle of the day? What am I to do on any particular Sunday, even at the early service, if I do not feel myself prepared to communicate? Or if by any dreadful lapse into temptation or sin I should feel myself unworthy to approach that Holy Mystery, am I debarred from being present to worship at the holy service in the middle-day? Am I debarred utterly from being there, even though, by my unworthiness, I feel that I am unable on the present occasion actually to receive? You see, when we talk of making the Holy Communion the chief service of Sunday, we are at once launched on this great question which presents some difficulties. 'Is it right (some people say it is wrong) to be present at the service of the Holy Communion at a time when I am not prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament?' In other words, what are we to say as to that practice of non-communicating attendance at the service of the Holy Communion which is very common now, and is frequently practised by devout and earnest Churchmen and communicants?

I will ask you, dear brethren, to make at the outset

a distinction, and if you are ever so unhappy as to be plunged into controversy, be quite sure you always make this distinction before you start. There is a very clear distinction to be made, which will help to clear the ground in this matter, which I will endeavour to put before you. It is commonly asserted that non-communicating attendance has a very formidable foe in Mr. Keble, who wrote a letter to the *Guardian* on January 24th, 1866, in which he asserted that we must be very careful lest we make attendance at the Holy Communion a substitute for devoutly receiving that Holy Sacrament. But an examination of his letter will show you that he is alluding therein to the non-communicating attendance of habitual non-communicants; he is not referring to the non-communicating attendance of those who are devout communicants at other times.

This is the distinction which we must be careful to make, between the attendance at Holy Communion of habitual non-communicants—people who have not been communicants and do not mean to be at the present moment—and the presence at any given Communion of those who are habitual communicants, but who are not prepared on that particular occasion to receive. The attendance of habitual non-communicants at these Divine Mysteries, I cannot help thinking, would have been repugnant to the feelings of the Primitive Church, and they correspond to those classes of people who are alluded to in the Exhortation of 1552, which runs in this way: ‘Whereas ye offend

God so sore in refusing this holy banquet, I admonish . . . and beseech you that unto this unkindness ye will not add any more, which thing ye shall do if ye stand by as gazers and lookers on them that do communicate and be not partakers of the same yourselves'. Those sort of people are called gazers and lookers-on, and apparently they were ordered out by this Exhortation in 1552. As I said, it is clearly a question whether the Holy Mysteries, so jealously guarded by the expulsion of the catechumens and the energumens and the penitents of the ancient Church, and hid behind the symbolism of barriers, screens, and reserve, should be open to those who are not communicants at all. But it is quite another question as to the attendance without communicating on the part of the faithful communicant, who is unable, for some ceremonial reason, all unwillingly, or from motives of reverence, to partake on a particular occasion. And it is of this second class that I am speaking now; and the distinction, I hope, is clear—namely, between the non-communicating attendance of habitual non-communicants, and the non-communicating attendance at any given time or on any given occasion of those who at other times are regular and devout communicants.

But there is one question as to which we especially desire an answer. We all love the Church of England, and whatever is disloyal to her we would give up in a moment. Is this loyal, to be at a celebration of the Holy Communion without communicating? I am prepared to say it is, and I want to give my grounds

for so saying. It must be remembered that it has been proposed more than once to insert a rubric to forbid the presence of those who do not intend to communicate at the Holy Communion; and the very fact of it being thought necessary to insert a rubric to forbid this shows that, as things now are, there is nothing in the service of the Church, in its present form, which forbids the attendance of those who wish to be present to worship, although they do not, at the time, intend to communicate. It may no doubt be conceded that the practice of the Primitive Church was for all to be present and for all to communicate at least every Sunday and Holyday; and further that the only exceptions were those who were driven out, not being suffered either to be present or to communicate—driven out for some special purpose. Those cases I have mentioned already. On the other hand, we have to meet the fact that the custom of non-communicating attendance is universal throughout the whole Church, East and West, except among a portion of our own people; and at the Reformation you must remember there was a great desire, and a right desire, to increase the number of communicants. Communion itself had fallen to a low condition; and this is to be borne in mind in showing how the question was there dealt with. Now, just look at the Reformation books and see what they say about it. The first instalment of the Reformation books is what is known as 'The Order of Communion,' which was put out in 1548 as a kind of Communion book for those who

were going to receive the Holy Communion according to the old rite. It was very much like one of our Communion books which we are accustomed to use privately when we come to receive the Holy Communion. This was a manual put out by authority in 1548, and there you will find these rubrics: 'The priest shall turn to them that are disposed to be partakers' (which clearly implies that there were those which were not disposed to be partakers); 'The priest shall say to them that be ready to take the Sacrament'; and in the fifth rubric, 'In the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion'; and subsequent rubrics have similar passages.

Now, in the first Prayer Book (1549) there is a rubric directing all the intending communicants to remain in the choir or near it, and all non-communicants to depart—not out of the church, but out of the choir. Then there is a later rubric which directs that 'the priest shall give thanks in the name of all them that have communicated, turning him first to the people, and saying. . . .' I would ask you to notice that that rubric which speaks about the people leaving the choir refers to the custom, which was observed in those days, of putting the money into a chest; the money was not collected at the Offertory, as it is now, but people used to come to the choir and put their alms into the money chest, which was near the high altar; and when this was done, they were to go out of the choir if they were not going to communicate.

In 1550 we have an episcopal injunction 'to place

the table in the chancel, so that the minister and the communicants may have their places separate from the rest of the people'. Another bishop says: 'So that the minister and communicants may be seen, heard, and understood of all the people there being present'; or again, 'The Communion ought not to be kept or celebrated in the church unless that the whole congregation, or at least a good part of them, do receive It'.

Now I come to the second Prayer Book (1552). There we have the warning to profane non-communicants which I have read to you. But note, there was no rubric inserted even then telling people they must go out. This rubric as to gazers and lookers-on is remarkable as showing how many people were then present who did not communicate. In Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book we have the same distinction drawn between the people who do not communicate and those who come to receive the Holy Communion. And in 1563 the Puritan faction petitioned Convocation 'that no person abide within the church during the time of Communion unless he do communicate,' which petition was rejected. So again in the 18th Canon, as regards leaving the church we read: 'Neither shall they disturb the service or sermon by walking or talking or in any other way, nor departing out of the church during the time of service or sermon, without some urgent or reasonable cause'.

With reference therefore to our present conditions, I think we may say this, that the very fact that a new

rubric has been asked for shows that the existing custom is lawful, and that non-communicating attendance does not interfere with the number of communicants, as some people say. As to justification of this practice from primitive times, there are certain canons which may be quoted; but to my mind the best authority we have for it is to be found in the ancient penitential system of the Church, which was formulated towards the end of the third century. There the penitents were divided into four classes, as follows: the *Flentes*, or weepers; the *Audientes*, or hearers; the *Substrati*, or kneelers; and the *Consistentes*—i.e. those who stood by. And these last, the *consistentes*, were those whose penance was now ending, who were allowed to be present, not as penitents, but as enjoying a privilege before being admitted to Holy Communion. Surely these *consistentes*, these people who were admitted as a privilege, will correspond to people at the present day who are incapacitated for various reasons from receiving, but still wish to assert their privilege of being present.

As to the benefits of non-communicating attendance, the celebration, as we know, is a valuable instruction for intending communicants—that is a minor consideration; but also we know that the celebration is a showing forth of the Lord's Death; and we all know, too, that the privilege of being present at that time follows very closely from the doctrine of the Real Presence, the especial Presence of our Lord in that Holy Sacrament; and we know also that when that

holy Sacrifice is being offered, it is a time for special intercession from which we would not be debarred. I think the whole matter is summed up by St. Augustine in his letter to Januarius:—

‘Let each do what he firmly believes according to his faith ought to be done. For neither of them dishonour the Body and Blood of the Lord, but emulously vie with each other which shall most honour that most health-giving Sacrament. For neither Zachæus nor that Centurion contended with each other when one of them gladly received the Lord into his home, while the other said, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof”. Both honouring the Saviour in a different and, as it were, opposite manner, both obtained mercy. The one, through honouring the Sacrament, does not venture to receive daily; the other, through honouring the Sacrament, does not venture to let a single day pass without receiving it. Contempt is the only thing that Food dislikes.’

It has been said that, from the analogy of the Jewish sacrifices, the Sacrifice of the Altar is not complete without partaking of it, and that no one can have part in the Sacrifice without communicating. That is not true. It is true that the priest, at least, must always receive, and that the Church desires communicants for the fullness of the rite. That is expressed in so many words in the Roman service of the Mass. But it is not true from the analogy of old sacrifices that communion was necessary to a participation in the

service. In the Peace Offering, the offerer must partake; but he never did so in the Burnt and Sin Offerings. This, too, is remarkable, that the daily sacrifice, which was offered twice a day, was a burnt offering, of which the people never partook, although it was the daily service. The Peace Offering, of which they partook, was only occasional. That is to say, they could not eat without offering, but they continually offered without eating. As a conclusion, we may admit that the truest and best course is to communicate as often as possible; but as in practice we fear to do this from feelings of reverence, or because we may not receive twice in one day, we believe that we may be present without receiving, and obtain thereby a secondary blessing—never the same as if we communicate—from being present at the Sacrament of Christ's Presence.

I should have liked to say a word about Eucharistic Worship, but there is no time. However, the subject of non-communicating attendance, I knew, needed our attention. I should like also to have said a word about the most unprimitive and uncatholic ceremony of Benediction. It was utterly unknown to primitive antiquity, and I think we must be on our guard against playing tricks with this great and holy Sacrament, and as to our methods of handling that Sacred Mystery. There is, as the Bishop of Worcester¹ says, a real danger in some parts of the Church—and one feels it again and again in foreign churches—of taking that Divine Presence which was given us for one purpose,

¹ Bishop Gore.

and using it for another, without any authority, and in a way which I think is very often not easily to be separated from unintentional but, at the same time, real irreverence.

In thinking of the Eucharistic life, there are thoughts which touch our inner life even closer than these; and inasmuch as we have had to go over controversial ground, I should like my last words to be devoted to such subjects. Let us see how the Church seeks to weave this Holy Sacrament into our very life. There is Sunday, our day for gathering the Manna, a day of rest and gladness and joy. Lo! to-day the Heavenly Manna lies round the host! Further than this, we are gradually beginning to see that the Holy Sacrament may be—if we come with reverence and earnest desire—as it was of old, our daily Food! But now it is all too true that our Eucharists are like Eucharists on the field of battle; we have a hard life before us, and perhaps the Eucharist of one day leads us on to the sharper conflict of another. We pass from struggle to struggle. But our Communion ought to be to us more and more our daily strength, our daily help in the hard battle of life, which God meant them to be.

Let us notice further how the Church seems to weave this Sacrament round different crises in our lives; and to reserve it especially for certain occasions. There is the glorious beauty of the nuptial Eucharist—which is only suggested now, alas! by our Prayer Book—which used to form part and parcel of that great and

solemn mystery which signifies the mystical union between Christ and His Church. Christ used to be invited, and is still invited in the case of devout Churchpeople, as of old to the marriage feast of Cana, to sanctify and adorn the marriage with His presence, in itself a protest against modern laxity and carelessness. When a marriage is so sanctified it would be less easy for the State to intrude with its unhallowed divorce courts and to permit marriages which are forbidden by the Church. It would be a warning to the world to stand back and not come within those sacred precincts, or to seek to undo that which Christ Himself had sanctioned and honoured by His Presence in the nuptial Eucharist, sanctifying that sacred tie which makes marriage in itself a Sacrament.

Then, once more, the Holy Eucharist is brought by the Church into our times of sickness and sorrow. When a man lies sick upon his bed, here again there are special means in the Prayer Book provided for him, so that he may receive the blessing of the Holy Communion to comfort him. Even in death itself there is the pleading of the great Sacrifice, at his funeral, not for the dead, but for the living departed: they live; they are more alive than we are. It is a misnomer to speak of 'Prayers for the Dead': they are not dead; they are only gone into another realm:—

One family, we dwell in Him,
One Church, above, beneath;
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of Death.

Some years ago a venerable Bishop said to me—and how wonderfully his words have come true!—‘You will find that just as images and statues in our churches have come back, when there is now no longer any fear of superstitious use respecting them, so prayers for the dead will come back in the Church when people have lost all fear of their misuse’. Certainly there is nothing more primitive, nothing which breathes more the spirit of the ancient Liturgies, than this holy love for the dead, this feeling that here, at all events, we are one in Christ, and that we share in our Communion the Chalice and the sacred Bread of Immortality with friends invisible close beside us, ‘who from their quiet resting-place—

‘The Chalice of the Lord pass on.

Love lives, although the loved are gone’.

And more especially in our own lives, our daily lives, not only at crises, but in every part of our lives, let us take the symbols—the bread symbolising life, the wine symbolising joy—as showing us that in and by this Holy Sacrament we must grow in grace, that our besetting sins must be rooted out, and that we must daily become holier. Just as the body grows by its food, so let our souls and spirits grow by this heavenly Food. Let us get rid of all those sins which do so easily beset us, and see to it that our Christian characters develop and grow apace within us. We ought to be getting on, growing and increasing in the knowledge of God, and to this end we are regular in our Communion; to this

end we come to our Communion with purpose ; to this end we come to our Communion with preparation. And as the wine symbolises to us the joy, so let us feel what a true service of joy this is in which Christ Himself comes to dwell with us and be with us ; so that we can say in wonder and awe, ' The Son of God is gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner '.

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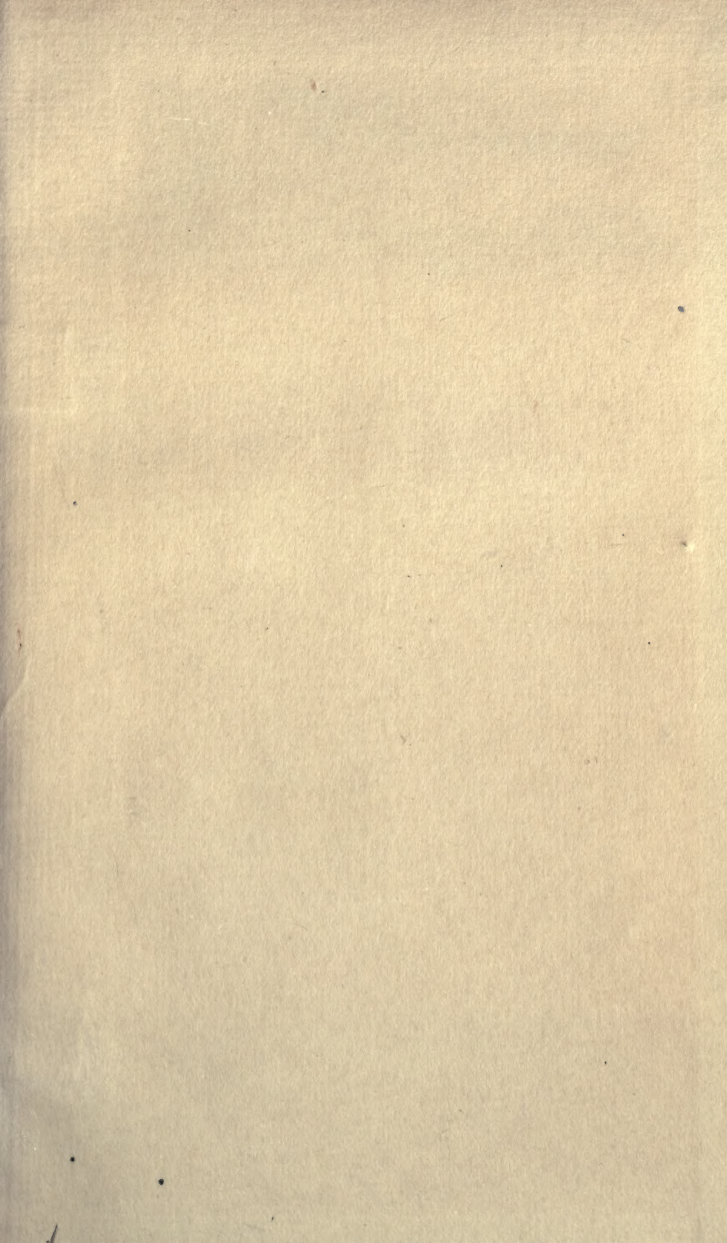
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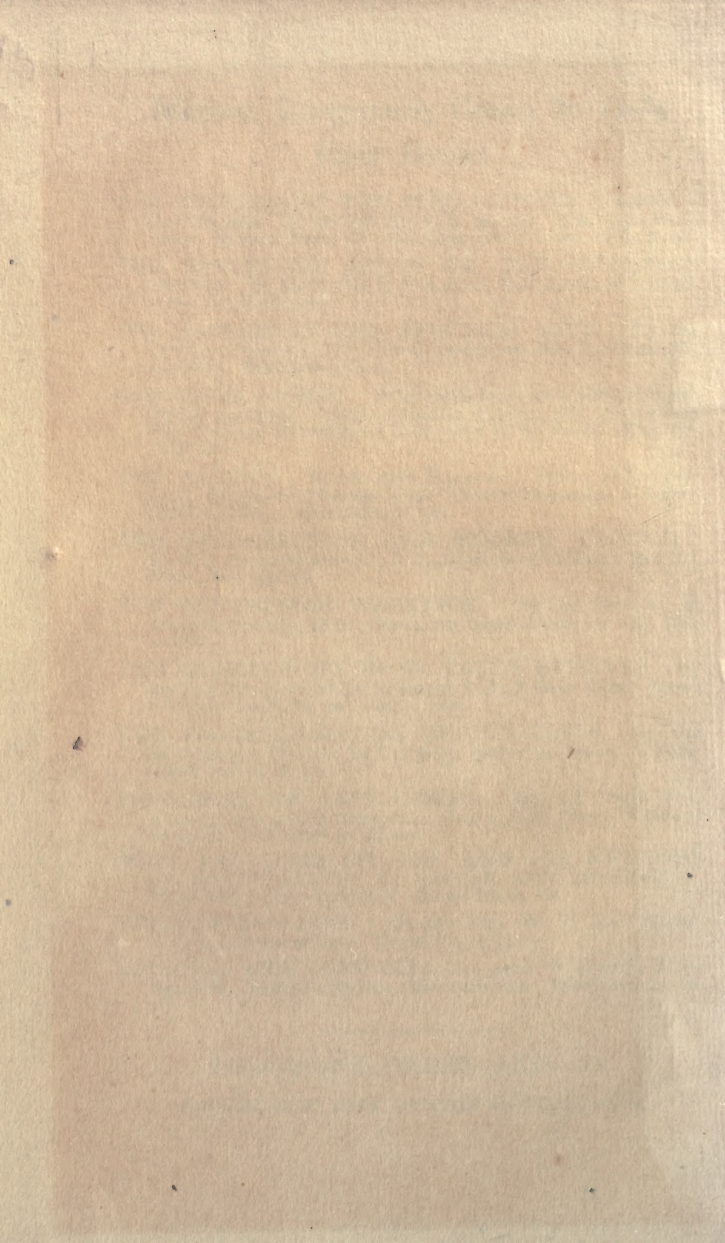
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